Transportation Commission meeting

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Work session regarding funding distribution and project mix**

Background
Each year, the Transportation Commission meets to make some global decisions regarding funding and projects. Two weeks later, the commission takes project-specific action through setting the Tentative Construction Program (TCP). Previous commissions have set the TCP for 2006-2009. This commission will set the TCP for 2010. Those discussions will take place the week of November 14, with final approval of the TCP taking place on Friday, November 18.

Items for decision

1. Approve the overall funding plan
   Determine how federal funding is allocated to various categories (e.g. National Highway System, Bridge, Urban, etc.)

   For background information regarding SAFETEA-LU, please visit the Federal Highway Administration's web page at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/index.htm

2. Based on information from MDT's asset management system (P3), set the funding allocations for each financial district.

3. Based on information from MDT's asset management system (P3), approve the project mix – pavement preservation/rehabilitation/reconstruction – for each financial district.

Commission action

Agenda item: 01

Staff person handling: Chairman Bill Kennedy

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Approve commission minutes**

Background

The following minutes are submitted to the commission for review and approval:

a. July 28, 205 meeting in Baker
b. Conference call on August 17, 2005
c. Conference call on August 29, 2005
d. September 8, 2005 meeting in East Glacier
e. Conference call on October 3, 2005

Staff recommendations

Staff recommends approval

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 02

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Special speed zones**

Background
Staff has performed traffic and engineering studies for the following:

a. Hanson Road – Urban Route 1820 (Butte-Silverbow County)
b. US 12 - East Helena – East (Lewis and Clark County)
c. Secondary 261 – Wibaux North (Wibaux County)
d. Secondary 399 – Whitehall North (Jefferson County)

Please see the attachments for more details.

Summary
The appropriate local government concurs with the recommendations put forth by MDT.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends the commission approve the special speed zones as proposed.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Memorandum

To: Loran Frazier, P.E. – Chief Engineer
Highways and Engineering Division

From: Duane E. Williams, P.E. - Traffic and Engineer

Date: October 12, 2005

Subject: **Hanson Road – Urban Route 1820**
Speed Limit Investigation & Recommendations

- With addition of Hanson Road to Butte-Silver Bow's federal-aid urban route system, the Public Works Director requested a speed limit investigation to evaluate the existing 25 mph speed limit for the purpose of considering an increase in the speed limit.

- Hanson Road constructed and maintained by Butte- Silver Bow is a two-lane roadway with a traffic volume of 1700. The adjacent side culture primarily consists of new residential development along the west side of the route and vacant land along the east side. In addition to residences there is a salvage yard with operations on both sides of the roadway and a railroad crossing located near the beginning of the route at the south end of the study area. With the exception of one curve the roadway is straight and flat.

- In the last three years this roadway has operated successfully with one reported accident. The accident rate is 0.92 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled.

- The results of our investigation indicated that the newly developed portion of the route is operating with speeds around 35 mph or below. The environment from the intersection with Rowe Road to the curve is more restrictive in character. The railroad crossing and the curve itself also have a downward influence on the travel speeds in this area than those observed along the remainder of the route. Based on the speed statistics in relationship to the various roadway and environmental characteristics we submitted a proposal for a 25 mph – 35 mph speed limit configuration.

- The following 25 mph – 35 mph speed limit configuration was presented to Butte-Silver Bow officials. They have submitted a letter, concurring with the following recommendation.

- **A 25 mph speed limit beginning at the intersection with Rowe Road and continuing west to station 13+50 (straight lines only), an approximate distance of 1,350 feet.**

  A 35 mph speed limit beginning at station 13+50 (straight lines only) and continuing northwest to the intersection with Montana Street, an approximate distance of 3,500 feet.

Report Submitted to Butte-Silver Bow

Hanson Road (U-1820) is a recent addition to Butte-Silver Bow's urban route system. With the federal-aid route designation the Public Works Director requested a speed limit investigation to determine if the posted 25 mph speed limit should be increased from the intersection with Rowe Road and continuing west, then northwesterly to the end of the urban route designation at the intersection with Beef Trail Road. However, local officials did not specify a desired speed limit.

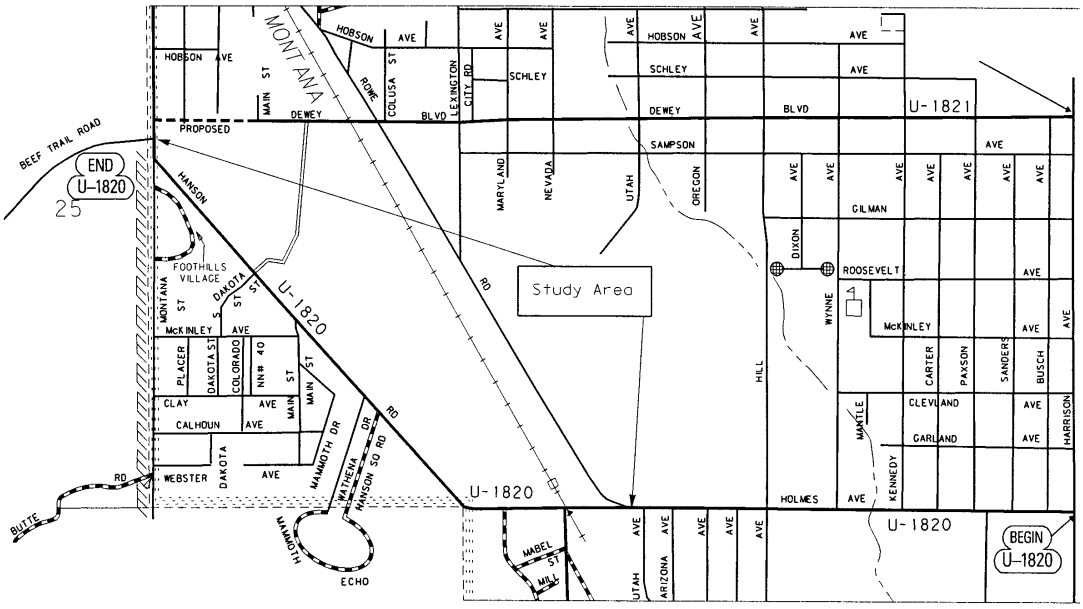

Figure 1

Hanson Road is made up of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction. Its overall surface varies from 24 feet to 34 feet in width. The above photo shows the recently developed 34-foot segment with curb & gutter along the west side of the roadway between the intersection with Wathena Drive and the intersection with Dakota Street. Along the eastside of the roadway the vast majority of the side culture consists of vacant land. There is a salvage yard and a concentration of residences located between the intersections with Western Boulevard and California Street near the beginning of the study area. This east - west segment is more restrictive in appearance than the remainder of the route. Other features within this segment include a railroad crossing and a horizontal curve. A ball-bank study conducted on the curve resulted in a 10-degree reading for speeds of 25 mph and a 15-degree reading for speeds of 30 mph.

This roadway was constructed by and is maintained by Butte-Silver Bow. During our investigation the daily traffic volume along the central portion of the route was 1700.

Accident History

The accident history was reviewed for a three-year period from January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2004. During this period there was one angle accident reported within the study area. The accident occurred between the intersection with Main Street and the intersection with Dakota Street. The accident rate is 0.92 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled.

Travel Speeds

Vehicular travel speeds were sampled at six locations beginning near the railroad crossing located on the east side of the study area and continuing northwest to the intersection with Montana Street. The following table depicts the 85th percentile speeds and the pace of the traffic by location.

Location	85th Percentile Speeds	Pace of Traffic Stream
Intersection with Western Boulevard	27 mph Westbound 28 mph Eastbound	(14 mph – 24 mph) 67% (17 mph – 27 mph) 65%
Within the Horizontal Curve West of California Street	29 mph Westbound 28 mph Eastbound	(20 mph – 30 mph) 81% (20 mph – 30 mph) 84%
400 Feet West of the Int. With Wathena Dr.	37 mph Westbound 37 mph Eastbound	(26 mph – 36 mph) 64% (26 mph – 36 mph) 62%
In Front of New Residences Between Wathena & Main St.	37 mph Westbound 39 mph Eastbound	(26 mph – 36 mph) 62% (26 mph – 36 mph) 57%
At Intersection With Dakota St.	37 mph Westbound 39 mph Eastbound	(26 mph – 36 mph) 58% (26 mph – 36 mph) 54%
Between Dakota St. And Montana St.	40 mph Westbound 40 mph Eastbound	(29 mph – 39 mph) 65% (29 mph – 39 mph) 59%

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the information gathered this roadway can be categorized into two segments. The first segment is the west extension of Holmes Avenue. The travel speeds along this segment are less than those identified along the remainder of the route. Within this segment the 85th percentile speeds ranged between 27 mph and 29 mph, reasonably close to the posted 25 mph speed limit.

Along the remainder of the route that follows a northwest alignment the 85th percentile speeds ranged between 36 mph and 40 mph. The pace of the traffic stream was (26 mph – 36 mph) at three of the four locations sampled.

Based on the travel speeds and their relationship to the roadway and adjacent side culture characteristics we recommend keeping the 25 mph speed limit along the Holmes Avenue extension. For the remainder of the study area that has started to experience additional residential development along the west side we recommend a 35 mph speed limit. The prevailing travel speeds along this segment are higher. The roadside character is more open in appearance with none of the geometric constraints or special features like those identified on the first segment.

A 25 mph speed limit beginning at the intersection with Rowe Road and continuing west to station 13+50 (straight lines only), an approximate distance of 1,350 feet.

A 35 mph speed limit beginning at station 13+50 (straight lines only) and continuing northwest to the intersection with Montana Street, an approximate distance of 3,500 feet.

We also recommend the installation of "Curve" warning signs (W1-2) for the change in roadway alignment just west of the intersection with California Street.

DEW:DRB:TRF:hansonrpt

attachments

copies: D.E. Williams
D.R. Bailey

Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Memorandum

To: Loran Frazier, P.E – Chief Engineer
Highways and Engineering Division

From: Duane E. Williams, P.E., Traffic and Safety Engineer

Date: October 13, 2005

Subject: Speed Limit Recommendation for Commission Action
US 12 – East Helena – East

- This investigation was conducted in response to an internal request that stemmed from a recent fatal accident that occurred at the intersection of Lake Helena Drive. The request was to review the area for accident trends and to evaluate the speed limit.

- Lake Helena Drive is the first major intersection that serves the East Helena area. The roadway consists of two 12-foot travel lanes separated by a left-turn bay with 6-foot shoulders in each direction. The 24-hour traffic volumes ranged from 8970 on the west side of Lake Helena Drive to 6980 just east of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive.

- The accident rate is 0.91 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled. This is below the statewide average for rural NHS primary routes. The level of multiple vehicle related conflicts at this intersection has increased since our last investigation in 2001.

- Based on that the pace is below the statutory 70 mph speed limit, the type of conflicts experienced and the orientation of this intersection to an urban setting it we recommend relocating the 55 mph to 70 mph transition east to encompass this intersection.

- Our proposal was submitted to Lewis and Clark County for review and comment. Based on the input received from the sheriff and county staff we adjusted our original recommendation to reflect the desires of the sheriff.

- **A 55 mph speed limit beginning at station 240+00, project F 8-2(5) (200' east of Secondary 518) and continuing east to station 293+50, an approximate distance of 5,350 feet.**

Report Submitted to Lewis and Clark County

This investigation was conducted in response to an internal request that stemmed from a recent fatal accident that occurred at the intersection of Lake Helena Drive with US 12, East Helena east. The request was to review the area for accident trends and to evaluate extending the special 55 mph speed limit east to encompass the intersection.

From the east the intersection with Lake Helena Drive is the first major intersection that serves East Helena and numerous residential subdivisions located in the greater East Helena area north of US 12. This "T" intersection is located at the base of a grade and at the edge of a horizontal curve. (see photo below)

The adjacent side roadside character is primarily rural in character as US 12 passes along the south side of East Helena. Available intersection and stopping sight distance at the site exceed the minimum desirable levels for the prevailing travel speeds and a 70 mph design speed. The typical section consists of two 12-foot travel lanes separated by a left-turn bay with 6-foot shoulders in each direction. During this investigation the 24-hour traffic volume ranged from 8970 on the west side of Lake Helena Drive to 6980 just east of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive.

Accident Experience

The accident experience was reviewed for a three year period from January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2004. During this period there were 10 accidents reported between milepost 50.0 and milepost 51.0. The accident rate is 0.91 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled. The statewide average for rural NHS primary routes is 1.30 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled. The following table lists the accident types by location.

	ANGLE	REAREND	SINGLE VEH.	OTHER
INTERSECTION	2	4	1	1
NON-INTERSECT.	-	-	2	-

Six of the 10 accidents reported occurred at the intersection with Lake Helena Drive. Two of those six accidents were rearend accidents that occurred on the side approach. There were three accidents reported west of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive. They consisted of two single vehicle accidents involving conflicts with wild animals and a rearend accident at the intersection with Secondary 518. There was one rearend accident reported in the rural environment east of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive.

Each of the detailed accident reports for the intersection with Lake Helena Drive was reviewed. There are no definable trends that pinpoint a correctable condition.

Travel Speeds

Vehicle travel speeds were sampled at the existing 55 mph to 70 mph speed limit transition located just west of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive and 600 feet in advance of the "Reduced Speed Ahead" sign located east of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive.

At the 55 mph to 70 mph speed limit transition there is a directional difference in the travel speeds. The 85th percentile speeds were 67 mph eastbound and 61 mph westbound. The pace ranged between (55 mph – 65 mph) eastbound with 49 percent of the traffic stream traveling within the pace and (49 mph – 59 mph) westbound with 45 percent of the traffic stream traveling within the pace.

East of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive the 85th percentile speeds were 68 mph in both directions. The pace ranged between (58 mph – 68 mph) eastbound and (55 mph – 65 mph) westbound with 53 percent of the traffic stream traveling within the pace.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As previously mentioned the intersection with Lake Helena Drive is the first major intersection encountered when approaching East Helena from the east. It is also located just outside the existing special speed limit configuration for the community of East Helena. The intersection generates approximately 2,000 turning movements a day. This volume of traffic and the volume on the mainline indicate that there is a definite potential to exposure to a speed differential.

There were more conflicts experienced at this intersection than within the boundaries of the existing 55 mph speed zone. Most of the conflicts experienced at the intersection with Lake Helena Drive are of the type typically associated with special or urban like traffic operation. The level of multiple vehicle related conflicts has increased since our last investigation in 2001.

Based on that the travel speeds are below the statutory 70 mph speed limit (particularly in the west bound direction), the type of conflicts experienced and the orientation of this intersection to an urban setting it is logical for the intersection to be encompassed within the special speed zone configuration for the community of East Helena. It is our opinion that relocating the 55 mph to 70 mph transition 900 feet east to encompass this intersection is within motorist expectations and therefore a reasonable option, as opposed to introducing a short transitional speed limit. With that we propose following revision to the 55 mph speed limit.

A 55 mph speed limit beginning at station 240+00, project F 8-2(5) (200' east of Secondary 518) and continuing east to station 284+00, an approximate distance of 4,400 feet.

Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Memorandum

To: Loran Frazier, P.E. – Chief Engineer
Highways and Engineering Division

From: Duane E. Williams, P.E. – Traffic & Safety Engineer

Date: October 12, 2005

Subject: Speed Limit Recommendations to the Montana Transportation Commission
Secondary 261 – Wibaux North Speed Limit Recommendation

- The study area is located north of Wibaux. The gravel portion of Secondary 261 from milepost 8.93 to 13.46 was recently reconstructed to pavement under project STPS 261-1(8). Upon completion of the project Wibaux County Commissioners requested the Department to reinstate the 70 mph statutory speed limit in place of the 55 mph speed limit that was established in November 2003.

- An engineering and traffic investigation was conducted last summer. The results of that investigation indicated with the roadway surface improvements, traffic operation in terms of travel speeds has changed. On the newly constructed segment the previously approved 55 mph speed limit no longer reflects traffic operation. With that conclusion we submitted a recommendation to relocate the southern boundary of the 55 mph speed zone to reinstate the 70 mph speed limit on the new roadway. Wibaux County Commissioners have responded that they concur with the recommendation. A copy of their comments as submitted is attached. Following is a description to realign the 55 mph speed zone to coincide with remaining gravel portion of the route within Wibaux County.

- **A 55 mph speed limit beginning at (metric) station 219+23, project STPS 261-1(8) and continuing north to the Wibaux County Line, an approximate distance of 14.34 miles.**

Report Submitted to Wibaux County

The portion of Secondary 261 from milepost 8.93 to 13.46 was recently reconstructed under project STPS 261-1(8), upgrading the graveled roadway surface to pavement. Since project completion Wibaux County Commissioners have requested a speed limit investigation for the purpose of reinstating the statutory 70 mph speed limit on the newly paved portion of the route. A 55 mph speed limit had been previously set on the graveled portion of the route within Wibaux County. With the recent roadway improvements the operational characteristics have changed considerably.

Secondary 261 begins at the Interstate 94 Wibaux Interchange and continues north. The first 8.93 miles of the route was already paved. Project STPH 261-1(8) extended the paved surface

out to milepost 13.46. The surrounding environment is rural consisting of rangeland and a rolling terrain. Average annual daily traffic volume within the study area is 165. The roadway consists of two 12-foot travel lanes with 1-foot shoulders in each direction, and has a design speed of 60 mph.

Accident History

There has not been a sufficient period of time since reconstruction for this segment of roadway to develop an accident history in which to report on.

Travel Speeds

Vehicular travel speeds were sampled directionally at six locations. The following table lists the 85th percentile speeds and the pace of the traffic stream by milepost location.

Location	85th percentile Speed	Pace of Traffic Stream & Percent
Milepost 8	Northbound 70 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 37%
	Southbound 73 mph	58 mph – 68 mph 44%
Milepost 9	Northbound 75 mph	55 mph – 65 mph 43%
	Southbound 70 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 51%
Milepost 10	Northbound 73 mph	55 mph – 65 mph 42%
	Southbound 67 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 47%
Milepost 11	Northbound 72 mph	55 mph – 65 mph 47%
	Southbound 74 mph	55 mph – 65 mph 46%
Milepost 12	Northbound 74 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 40%
	Southbound 69 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 53%
Milepost 13	Northbound 71 mph	52 mph – 62 mph 50%
	Southbound 70 mph	55 mph – 65 mph 53%

The travel speeds within the portion of the 55 mph speed zone in which the roadway was reconstructed are consistent with those observed at milepost 8.0 and that commonly associated with the statutory 70 mph speed limit for rural secondary highways. At each of the four locations sampled within the 55 mph speed zone the 85th percentile speeds support re-instating the 70 mph speed limit. The upper limit of the pace was consistently lower, typically at or near 65 mph.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Traffic along this segment of Secondary 261 is traveling at a level in which the statutory 70 mph speed limit is more realistic than the existing 55 mph speed limit that was established for traffic operation associated with a gravel road. The results of this investigation support the county's desire to the change the speed limit.

We recommend relocating the 70 mph to 55 mph speed limit transition from its current location at milepost 8.9 to milepost 13.46 where the pavement to gravel transition now takes place. Therefore, reducing the length of the 55 mph speed zone from 18.9 miles to 14.34 miles.

A 55 mph speed limit beginning at (metric) station 219+23, project STPS 261-1(8) and continuing north to the Wibaux County Line, an approximate distance of 14.34 miles.

DEW:DRB:TRF:s261rpt

attachments

copies: D.E. Williams
D.R. Bailey

Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Memorandum

To: Loran Frazier, P.E. – Chief Engineer
Highways and Engineering Division

From: Duane E. Williams, P.E. - Traffic and Safety Engineer

Date: October 13, 2005

Subject: Speed Limit Recommendation for Commission Action
Secondary 399 - Whitehall North

This investigation was conducted at the request of Jefferson County Commissioners in response to concerned citizens and that there are no approved special speed limits on Secondary 399.

This study was originally assigned to an independent consultant. In weighing the results of the consultant's study with public comment, we determined there was a need to further investigate the area just north of Whitehall. The report that follows this summary contains the results of our second study.

The proposed speed limits resulting from the second study were also not well received by the public. Staff from the Butte District Office attended a public hearing in which both the engineering recommendations and the desires of the public were discussed. Upon receiving written comments from Jefferson County Commissioners voicing the concerns of local residents, the Department reevaluated the study results while focusing on the public issues encountered.

The majority of the opposition to the proposed speed limit configuration stemmed from those residents living along Secondary 399 within the curb & gutter segment in the vicinity of milepost 1.0. We discussed three features that distinguish this segment of roadway from that identified north and south of the curb & gutter segment. In addition to the obvious change in the typical section to that typically reserved for an urban type environment there is adjacent development and also some reduction in the travel speeds below 60 mph as evidenced by the pace of the traffic stream. By focusing exclusively on this information and taking into account the publics desire for a speed limit less than 60 mph we have modified our original recommendation.

Our conclusion was that we could support and recommend a 50 mph speed limit specifically for residential development located along the roadway within the curb & gutter segment. With that in place we did not see much benefit to be gained by changing to 60 mph for a short distance and then down to 45 mph along the segment between the community of Whitehall and the curb & gutter segment. Under the circumstances we feel that a longer 50 mph speed zone is a practical option. What follows is a recommendation for a 35 mph – 50 mph – 60 mph speed limit configuration. The proposed speed limits were presented to Jefferson County Commissioners. Their letter concurring with the following recommendation is attached.

A 35 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 12+60, project STPP 55-3(9) and continuing north to metric station 12+50, project STPS 399-1(3), an approximate distance

of 440 meters or 1450 feet.

A 50 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 12+50, project STPS 399-1(3) and continuing north to metric station 27+80 (milepost 1.2), an approximate distance of 1530 meters or 5,020 feet.

A 60 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 27+80, project STPS 399-1(3) and continuing north to metric station 39+80 (milepost 1.9), an approximate distance of 1,200 meters or 3,940 feet.

From milepost 1.9 to the end of the pavement the statutory 70 mph speed limit will remain in effect.

Department's Report Submitted to Jefferson County

We have conducted a follow-up to the general speed limit investigation conducted on Secondary 399. This investigation focused specifically on the area of local concern beginning in Whitehall and continuing north to milepost 1.9. Additional traffic data was collected to a develop a more precise speed profile in which to evaluate Jefferson County's request for an adjustment in the proposed 60 mph speed limit north of Whitehall.

An independent consulting engineering firm under our term contract program conducted the original investigation. Based on the information contained within the consultant's report and an on-site drive thru of the area with both the consultant and the district traffic engineer we recommended reducing the statutory 70 mph speed limit to 60 mph from milepost 0.0 to milepost 1.9. The proposed 60 mph speed limit was submitted to Jefferson County Commissioners for review and comment. Upon receiving the results county officials held a public hearing to gather public comment. Staff from the Butte District office was also present at and participated in the public hearing to address the concerns of area residents. A few days following the public hearing Jefferson County Commissioners submitted written comments to the Butte District office. The following bullets identify the three specific requests as submitted within their comments.

- From the edge of Whitehall through the first set of curves, near the Forest Service building, the speed limit of 35 mph.
- From this point to a point just north of milepost 1.9 a speed limit of 45 mph.
- After milepost 1.9 proceeding north to the end of the paved section a speed limit of 60 mph.

Secondary 399 begins at the Interstate 90 Whitehall Interchange and continues north. South of the interchange the route is designated as a state primary route. In 2001 this portion of Secondary 399 was reconstructed from an 18-foot wide gravel road to a 28-foot wide pave roadway. With the completion of project STPS 399-1(3) this roadways operational potential was improved considerably.

We also looked at the most recent accident history available. Since reconstruction in 2001 to December 31, 2004 there have been no accidents reported between milepost 0.0 and milepost 2.0.

The original investigation was expanded upon by collecting travel speed data at eight additional locations beginning near the intersection with Commercial Way Road in Whitehall and continuing north. The table following depicts the 85th percentile speeds and the pace of the traffic stream by location. We have also included two of the consultant's spot speed samples that were collected within this segment during the first investigation. They are in italics.

Location	**85th percentile Speed**	**Pace of Traffic Stream & Percent**
Commercial Way Road (25 mph zone)	Northbound 33 mph Southbound 29 mph	23 mph – 33 mph (66%) 20 mph – 30 mph (73%)
In Front of Forest Service Office	Northbound 41 mph Southbound 41 mph	29 mph – 39 mph (56%) 29 mph – 39 mph (51%)
500 feet north of Forest Service Office	Northbound 46 mph Southbound 51 mph	35 mph – 45 mph (51%) 38 mph – 48 mph (45%)
Milepost 0.3 (within 2nd horizontal curve)	Northbound 55 mph Southbound 56 mph	41 mph – 51 mph (41%) 44 mph – 54 mph (41%)
Milepost 0.50 (first study)	*Northbound 60 mph* *Southbound 59 mph*	*47 mph – 57 mph (53%)* *50 mph – 60 mph (40%)*
Milepost 0.55	Northbound 63 mph Southbound 62 mph (32%)	50 mph – 60 mph (31%) 47 mph – 57 mph
Near Milepost 1.0	Northbound 64 mph Southbound 62 mph	46 mph – 56 mph (34%) 43 mph – 53 mph (35%)
Milepost 1.1 (first study)	*Northbound 62 mph* *Southbound 63 mph*	*45 mph – 55 mph (39%)* *50 mph – 60 mph (38%)*
Location	**85th percentile Speed**	**Pace of Traffic Stream & Percent**
At Milepost 1.25	Northbound 68 mph Southbound 63 mph (35%)	43 mph – 53 mph (30%) 46 mph – 56 mph
At Milepost 1.5	Northbound 69 mph Southbound 64 mph (40%)	52 mph – 62 mph (32%) 52 mph – 62 mph

Ball-bank studies were also conducted on the horizontal curves north of the Interstate 90 Interchange. The first curve along the segment that passes by the Forest Service office ball-

banked with a comfortable travel speed of 35 mph. The second curve immediately to the north had a comfortable travel speed of 65 mph.

In relationship to speed there is a change in traffic operation that takes place just north of the Forest Service office that was not identified within the previous investigation. From this point south into the Whitehall urban district the travel speeds are transitional in character.

The 85th percentile speeds within the remainder of the study area were consistent with those identified by the consultant. However, with the additional traffic data we did see a greater variation between the 85th percentile speeds and the upper limit of the pace. Also, there is a smaller proportion of the traffic stream traveling within the pace.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The additional traffic data clearly identifies a change in roadway operation that was not included within the original study. The combination of the horizontal curves in conjunction with their orientation to the Whitehall urban district lends support for revising the proposed speed limit configuration. In relationship to the county's request a 35 mph speed limit beginning at the intersection with Commercial Way Road and continuing north through the first horizontal curve can be supported. The speed profile projects that the 85th percentile speeds are 35 mph within the central portion of this segment. At the north end of the first curve the speed limit would then transition to 45 mph and continue on into the second curve.

As for the remainder of the study area the traffic data does not support local desires for a lower speed limit configuration. We feel it is appropriate to offer Jefferson County officials an explanation as to how we arrived at this conclusion. An in depth review of the speed statistics was conducted to evaluate how well a 45 mph speed limit would perform as opposed to the originally proposed 60 mph speed limit. Based solely on the pace of the traffic stream identified at stations 5, 6 and 7, there appeared to be some evidence in which to support a lower 55 mph speed limit. However, to recommend a 55 mph speed limit we would have had to disregard the 85th percentile speeds and also that proportion of the traffic stream traveling between the upper limit of the pace and the 85th percentile speeds. To put this in a different perspective approximately 40 percent to 60 percent of the traffic stream is exceeding 55 mph within this segment. Approximately 80 percent of all motorists would exceed the requested 45 mph speed limit. Studies have shown that there is no true value in setting artificially low speed limits.

North of milepost 1.9 to the end of the pavement the environment and roadway operational characteristics are consistent with those in which intended for statutory 70 mph speed limit is intended for. Based on current engineering practices and the responsibility granted to this office we recommend the following revised speed limit configuration for Secondary 399.

A 35 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 12+60, project STPP 55-3(9) and continuing north to metric station 12+50, project STPS 399-1(3), an approximate distance of 440 meters or 1450 feet.

A 45 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 12+50, project STPS 399-1(3) and continuing north to metric station 14+90, an approximate distance of 240 meters or 800 feet.

A 60 mph speed limit beginning at metric station 14+90, project STPS 399-1(3) and continuing north to metric station 39+80 (milepost 1.9), an approximate distance of 2,490 meters or 1.54 miles.

From milepost 1.9 to the end of the pavement the statutory 70 mph speed limit will remain in effect.

DEW:DRB:TRF:s399rpt2

attachments

copies: D.E. Williams
D.R. Bailey

Agenda item: 03

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005, Helena MT

Item: **Montana Rest Area Plan status review**

Background

The Montana Rest Area Plan has guided commission and MDT decisions regarding Montana's rest areas since the 1980s. The plan originally consisted entirely of a map that showed existing and proposed rest area locations. However, in the late 1990s, in response to increasing complaints about Montana's rest areas (Attachment A), MDT involved the public and representatives of key user groups in a comprehensive update of the plan to establish overall policy direction. The Transportation Commission adopted the updated plan in 1999.

The resulting changes in the quality and maintenance of our rest areas have produced a significant reduction in the number of complaints MDT receives about its rest areas. The public reaction to MDT's newest rest areas at Sweet Grass, Bozeman, Lolo Pass, Lost Trail Pass, and Dena Mora has also been overwhelmingly positive (Attachment B) and we expect a similar response to the new Mosby rest area after it opens later this year. Additional new rest areas at, Dearborn, Bearmouth, Crow Agency, Harlowton, and Lima are either under construction or in the design process.

The Montana Rest Area Planning Map (Attachment C) shows existing rest areas as well as planned rest areas consistent with the policies in the original 1999 *Montana Rest Area Plan* and subsequent updates approved by the Transportation Commission. Attachment D highlights the recently completed rest areas with the year they have come on-line.

Although Montana's rest areas have improved over the last five years, funding limitations have caused delays in several planned rest area projects in order to complete critical highway projects. This has affected MDT's recent success in completing one major rest area improvement project per year. Because of this, the Transportation Commission last year asked MDT to commit to funding one major rest area improvement project per year. MDT staff is also developing a methodology based on factors including traffic levels, condition of existing facility, and proximity to existing updated facilities to recommend the sequencing of rest area improvements for consideration by the Commission when approving future Tentative Construction Programs.

In response to a recommendation from a performance audit of MDT's Rest Area Program by the Legislative Audit Division, MDT developed an annual review process of the *Rest Area Plan* and amended the plan to include a description of this process. The annual review process includes a report on the status of Montana's existing and planned rest areas (Attachment E), technical edits to the Montana Rest Area Planning Map, and suggested changes to planned rest area locations.

Staff is not recommending any changes to planned rest area locations this year that would require commission approval. However, MDT has initiated a corridor study of rest area issues on Interstate 94 between Billings and Miles City that could lead to recommendations for changes next year. The study will analyze the condition of the existing aging facilities, examine potential future sites, and make recommendations for general design features. The study will involve local elected officials, business leaders and the public to ensure the recommendations are consistent with area priorities and concerns. In addition, there may be recommendations regarding sequencing for the commission to consider during this fall's meeting on the Tentative Construction Program.

Summary

Attached is a copy of the current Montana Rest Area Planning Map and the annual Rest Area Status Report. The updated report provides detailed information about all Montana rest areas. The following technical edits to the Montana Rest Area Planning Map are based on input from district administrators and other MDT staff involved in rest area planning and maintenance:

- *District 1 – Missoula*
    - Lolo Pass (US-12/N-93, MP-0) – Change symbol to reflect an "In-place Rest Area Maintained by Others" and remove symbol reflecting "Neighboring State Rest Area".
- *District 2 – Butte*
    - Lima (I-15, MP-10) – Move symbol for proposed rest area to the east side of the interstate as it will be constructed at MDT's existing maintenance yard.
    - North 19TH (I-90, MP-305) – Change name of facility from "N-19TH" to "Bozeman" to properly reflect the location.
- *District 4 – Glendive*
    - Mosby (MT-200/N-57, MP-159) – Change symbol from "Proposed Rest Area-Future Construction" to "In-place Rest Area-State Maintained" as Mosby will come on-line this summer.

Staff recommendations

There are no staff recommendations; this agenda item is for informational purposes and it fulfills the audit recommendation of reviewing the rest area plan annually and reporting to the commission.

Notes/discussion

Agenda item: 04

Staff person handling: Tim Reardon and Right-of-Way Staff

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **New Outdoor Advertising Rules**

Background
The Right-of-Way Bureau has undertaken a review and rewrite of various portions of the Administrative Rules of the Commission controlling the permitting and enforcement of outdoor advertising signs. The last major revision was done in 2005. Both the Bureau staff and the Director's Office have been receiving complaints about certain types of signs such as local community "Welcome To ___" signs, Directional signs and Off-Premise Changeable Message signs. The complaints claim that the present rules are too restrictive. Since the Bureau staff was rewriting those rules, a review was undertaken to examine all of the rules. The result is the proposed draft Notice as Attachment 1, which is as 1 new rule to be adopted, and the amendment of 7 existing rules

This is one of the areas were the Transportation Commission by law, Section 75-15-121 MCA, must adopt the Administration Rules, not the Department. Because it is always a good idea to hold a public hearing when adopting such rules, the proposed Notice will contain the appointment of a hearing officer, Tim Reardon and a proposed date to be set at least 28 days after the Notice is printed in the Montana Administrative Register.

Staff recommendations
The Legal Unit and the Right-of-Way Bureau staff recommend that the Commission approve the propose Notice and have the Chairperson sign the Notice to file with the Secretary of State's Office for publication in the Register. After the public hearing is conducted and comments are received, the Department Legal Unit and Right-of-Way Bureau will finalize the proposed changes to the rules. That document will be submitted to the Commission for final review and adoption. Once adopted in final form by the Commission, the new rules will be filed with the Secretary of State's Office for printing in the ARM.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Sub-Chapter 2

Outdoor Advertising Regulations

RULE I OFFICIAL SIGNS (1)Official signs must be erected and maintained by a public officer or agency.

(2) Official signs must be erected within the territorial jurisdiction or zoning jurisdiction of the public officer or agency. This means that the officer or agency must exercise some form of governmental authority over the area upon which the sign is located.

(3) Official signs must be erected pursuant to direction or authorization contained in Federal, State or local law. This means that the officer must be directed by statute and/or must have the specific authority by statute to erect and maintain signs and notices.

(4) Local governments may erect, within the limits of their jurisdiction, official signs welcoming travelers and describing the services and attractions available but may not advertise private business or brand names.

(5) Not more than one official sign welcoming visitors or providing information about a community is allowed on each highway entering the community, subject to Federal and State Outdoor Advertising Control (OAC) Rules.

(6) On Interstate Highways, official "welcome to" signs may be erected within 5 miles of a community. Not more than one "welcome to" sign in each direction is allowed.

(7) An official sign of a local government will not be considered in determining the spacing required between conforming outdoor advertising signs located off premises.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-111, 75-15-113, MCA

REASON: Most Montana communities are rural in nature and have no avenue to inform the traveling public of their location. Additionally, "Welcome to" signs erected by local authority with no commercial advertising comes into compliance with the CFR as official signage.

18.6.202 DEFINITIONS (1) Remains as is.

(2) "Commercial electronic variable message signs"(CMS) means electrical or electromechanical signs on which messages can be changed remotely through hard wire or wireless communications and have the capability to present a large amount of text and/or symbolic imagery. ~~contain, include, or are illuminated by any flashing, intermittent, or moving light or lights, producing the illusion of movement by means of electronic, electrical or electro-mechanical input~~ Other names ~~for~~ CMS are "variable message signs"(VMS), "dynamic message signs" (DMS), "smart boards" (SBS), or "tri-vision" (TVS) and/or have the characteristics of one or more of the following classifications:

(2)(a) - (6) Remain as is.

(7) "Noncommercial sign" means a sign that does not display a commercial message. For the purpose of this rule, only ~~"welcome to" community and~~ "public service" signs such as DARE,

~~or~~ ABATE, are considered noncommercial signs. The Montana department of transportation shall make the determination of a noncommercial sign designation on a case-by-case basis.

(8) - (12) Remain as is.

(13) "School" means a place of learned instruction; an institution of learning; an educational establishment; a place for acquiring knowledge and mental training; a place of primary instruction.

(14) "Government venue" means a place where events may occur that is open to, accessible to or shared by all members of the community; a common area used to share information, to take action, and to validate decisions.

(15) "Official signs and notices" means signs and notices erected and maintained by public officers or public agencies within their territorial or zoning jurisdiction and pursuant to and in accordance with direction or authorization contained in Federal, State, or local law for the purposes of carrying out an official duty or responsibility. Historical markers, welcome to, public utility signs authorized by State law and erected by State or local government agencies may be considered official signs.

Auth: 75-15-121, MCA
Imp: 75-15-121, 75-15-111, 75-15-112,AND 75-15-113, MCA

REASON: Changes in the definitions rule were done to clarify some definitions that have caused disputes with reference to prior interpretations and to clarify new language to the rules.

18.6.211 PERMITS (1) - (4) Remain as is.

(5) The initial permit fee must be paid within 30-days from the approval of the application or the permit may be canceled.

~~(5)~~(6) 5 is renumbered 6.

~~(6)~~(7) 6 is renumbered 7.

~~(7)~~(8) 7 is renumbered 8.

(9) Ownership of a sign permit will not be transferred without the expressed written consent of the permit holder(s). The current permit holder(s) must sign the document transferring the permit.

(10) Permits cannot be canceled except by the written request of either the permit holder(s) or the landowner (s) subject to the department's approval or by violations of the provisions of the Outdoor Advertising Act. The document requesting cancellation of a permit must be signed by the current permit holder or the landowner(s).

(11) If the permit holder(s) are unable or unwilling to sign the cancellation document, the landowner(s) may request cancellation of the permit by providing the department with a document stating the reason for cancellation (such as termination of the land lease between the permit holder(s) and the landowner(s) and indicating whether the landowner(s) have purchased the sign structure or if the sign structure will be removed. The landowner(s) must sign this document.

AUTH: 75-15-121 and 75-15-122, MCA
IMP: 75-15-122

REASON: The transfer of permits is addressed in Chapter nine of the Right-of-Way manual, which has no force of law.

Additionally, the new language clarifies the process of transferring permits for the sign owners and landowners.

18.6.212 PERMIT APPLICATIONS – NEW SIGN SITES

(1) – (2)(b) Remain as is.

(3) The applicant must clearly mark the physical place the sign is to be erected with the exact location of the proposed sign site to enable department personnel to perform the required site inspection.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-122, MCA

REASON: This rule was incomplete with the need to give adequate information so that departmental personnel could find the proposed sign sites to do the required site inspections.

18.6.221 NEW SIGN ERECTION (1) The sign owner within six months of the date of issuance of the permit will:

(a) erect the sign structure (an extension of time to erect the structure may be granted upon written request from the sign owner and at the discretion of the Montana Department of Transportation);

(b) – (c) Remain as is.

(d) attach name plaque to structure identifying the sign owner.

~~(d)~~ (e) d is lettered e.

(2) Remains as is.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-122, MCA

REASON: This is a clarification which is reasonably necessary to identify of the sign owner who is often out of state. Additionally, it has been a customary practice to grant an extension of time of erect a sign structure beyond that required by the rules at the discretion of the department for reasons such as weather conditions or situations beyond the sign owners control but, does not have the force of law.

18.6.232 COMMERCIAL ELECTRONIC VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGNS

(1) Off-premise commercial electronic variable message signs(CMS), ~~regardless of the message, are prohibited in controlled areas.~~ which presents a new message, pictorial image, or change illumination at a rate less than one every six seconds is determined to be flashing or moving light and are prohibited in controlled areas.

(2) The following signs and operations are exempt from one or more of the requirements of this chapter but shall comply with all other applicable provisions:

(a) Government venue or school signs designed and intended to notify the community of private and public school activities or classes and intended to provide notice of appreciation for individuals, groups and businesses which promote, sponsor or support the school or government venue.

(3) A commercial electronic variable message sign (CMS), may be approved as an off-premise outdoor advertising sign within the zoning jurisdiction of city and town areas if the sign does

not contain flashing, intermittent, or moving lights, and does not cause a glare on the roadway and the following conditions are met:

(a) A message on a sign must have a minimum display (dwell) time of 6 seconds and a maximum change (twirl) interval of 3 seconds; and

(b) A sign must contain a mechanism that will stop the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs; and

(c) Signs shall be water tight, with service holes to provide access to each compartment with fitted waterproof covers; and

(d) Signs must not be placed with illumination that interferes with the effectiveness of or obscure any official traffic sign, device or signal; and

(e) Signs must not include or be illuminated by flashing, intermittent or moving lights; and

(f) Signs must not cause beams or rays of light to be directed at the traveled way if the light is of such intensity or brilliance or is likely to be mistaken for a warning or danger signal or to cause glare or impair the vision of any driver, or to interfere with the driver's operation of a motor vehicle; and

(g) Illumination or lights for signs must not resemble or simulate any lights used to control traffic; and

(h) Jumping arrows or rapid chasing or flashing lamp borders is prohibited; and

(i) Techniques of message display such as fading, exploding, dissolving messages are prohibited; and

(j) Signs are prohibited on horizontal and vertical curves; and

(k) On interstate highway or freeway, signs are prohibited within 1000 feet of an interchange or intersection at a grade or rest area. The 1000 feet is to be measured along the interstate or freeway from the beginning or ending of the pavement widening at the exit from or entrance to the main- traveled way; and

(l) Signs shall only be constructed as a single face, back-to-back or two-faced V-shaped structure. Only one face may be visible in each direction of the main traveled way. Side by side or stacked signs are prohibited; and

(m) Signs located within 1000 feet of highway work zones where changing traffic patterns, sudden stops, workers, pedestrians and work equipment are present will be turned off for that period of time to be determined by the Montana Department of Transportation; and

(n) Signs shall not be placed within 2000 feet of another sign measured along the nearest edged of the pavement between points directly opposite the signs on the same side of the roadway; and

(o) Portable signs may not be used as permanent illuminated signage; only fixed signs are permitted; and

(p) Wording that implies a traffic control or highway emergency(for example, use of the word "STOP" is prohibited).

(q) Traffic Control Device (TCD) signs or symbols (such as an eight-sided stop sign) in signs are prohibited; and

(r) No sign may be illuminated to a degree of brightness that is greater than necessary for adequate visibility. Signs found to be brighter than necessary for adequate visibility shall be adjusted by the person owning or controlling the sign in

accordance with the instructions of the Montana Department of Transportation; and

(s) Appreciation plaques attached to government venue or school signs can be no larger than 1 foot by 3 foot in size.

(4) An existing sign may be modified or updated if the sign conforms with established criteria relating to zoning, size, lighting and spacing. Prior approval from the Montana Department of Transportation is required to modify existing signs, to include a new sign application and a new nonrefundable application fee of $200.00 will be charged.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-111 and 75-15-113, MCA

REASON: "Forty-one of the 46 states with billboards allow changeable message technology. As technological innovations continue to out pace government regulations, the trend line is moving toward nearly all states (with billboards) to accommodate changeable message signs." Embracing this new technology is good business for Montana advertisers and consumers.

18.6.242 RANCH AND RURAL DIRECTIONAL SIGNS (1) ~~In rural residential areas, slat-type directory~~ Directional signs are allowed at ~~the outer edge of the right-of-way of the~~ intersecting roadways that enter into the main travel way, and may only be erected along the federal-aid primary highway system~~, giving the name only~~. Each ~~slat~~ directional sign is not to exceed ~~8" x 36"~~ 4'X 8'.

(2) In cases where operations do not abut the highway, but have access via a nonpublic access road across other ownerships, directional signs may be located along this roadway leading to the operation~~., may bear the name of the operation or owner and distance to headquarters, but shall include no advertising.~~ The message content on directional and ranch signs shall be limited to the identification of the attraction or activity and directional information useful to the traveler in locating the activity, such as mileage, route numbers, or exit numbers. Descriptive words or phrases, and pictorial or photographic representations further describing the activity or its environs are prohibited.

(3) ~~Ranch and rural directional signs may only be erected along the federal-aid primary highway system. The message content on rural directional signs shall be limited to the identification of the attraction or activity and directional information useful to the traveler in locating the activity, such as mileage, route numbers, or exit numbers. Descriptive words or phrases, and pictorial or photographic representations further describing the activity or its environs are prohibited~~. Not more than one ranch sign or directional sign may be erected which is visible to traffic proceeding in any one direction on any highway and advertising activities being conducted upon the real property, including ranching, grazing, and farming activities

(4) - (6) Remain as is.

~~(7) Not more than one ranch sign may be erected which is visible to traffic proceeding in any one direction on any primary highway and advertising activities being conducted upon the real property, including ranching, grazing, and farming activities~~.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-111 and 75-15-121, MCA

REASON: Further clarification is needed to bring this rule into compliance with the CFR. This amendment is reasonably necessary to reflect current changes to the CFR and recognizes the growing concern by rural Montanans that the activities were being unreasonably restricted in being able to alert the pubic as to their location and activity conducted on their property.

18.6.245 NONCOMMERCIAL SIGNS (1) If a noncommercial sign is located on property of the owner of the sign, it shall be considered to be an on-premise sign and not subject to the provisions of this rule.

(2) A noncommercial sign of a local government may be erected anywhere adjacent to an interstate and primary highway within its territorial or zoning jurisdiction, except in a scenic area or parkland, so long as the sign does not create a safety hazard to the traveling public.

(a) A noncommercial sign will not be considered in determining the spacing required between conforming outdoor advertising signs located off premises.

~~(b) Local government may erect, within the limits of their jurisdiction, noncommercial signs welcoming travelers and describing the services and attractions available but may not advertise private business or brand names.~~

~~(c) Not more than one noncommercial sign welcoming visitors or providing information about a community is allowed on each highway entering the community, subject to federal and state outdoor advertising control (OAC) rules.~~

~~(3) A noncommercial "welcome to" community sign shall not exceed 150 square feet in size.~~

~~(4)~~(3) 4 is renumbered as 3.

~~(5)~~(4) 5 is renumbered as 4.

AUTH: 75-15-121, MCA
IMP: 75-15-111,MCA

REASON: To come into compliance with the CFR and make this rule more community friendly. There is a reasonable necessity for the amendment of this rule to clarify the need of local communities to advise the public of their location.

Agenda item: 05

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Two SAFETEA-LU Earmarks on MDT Right-of-Way**
(Also see Agenda Item 9 for related project)

Background
Attached are two projects that have received Congressional earmarked dollars through the SAFETEA-LU authorization. SAFETEA-LU earmarked funds for thirty-three off and on-system project. These projects will receive an annual allocation and funds can be transferred between named projects, so projects may be able to advance to construction as soon as they are ready, provided that other projects are not disadvantaged and all funding accounts are balanced by the end of fiscal year 2009.

The first project is located on MDT right-of-way which would normally require commission approval, but because they already in the program they are being presented as informational items, not requiring Commission action. The second project will intersect MDT right-of-way and is new to the program and as such requires Commission approval. Other earmarked projects will be brought to the Commission for action as roles, responsibilities and pre-programming processes are concluded.

Conrad I-15 North Interchange ($4 million)
The current Conrad I-15 North Interchange only provides access to the west of I-15. The intent of this project is to construct a northbound exit ramp, and realign the northbound entrance ramp to provide access to the east of the Interstate. In addition, within the footprint of the Interchange, a highway safety rest area will be constructed serving both sides of Interstate travel with funding beyond what is needed for the interchange. Local government has agreed to include a rest area within this project, but its funding request to the Congressional Delegation was only to expand service off the interchange to the east. A rest area at this location is consistent with the department's rest area plan. The current cost estimates for the two components is: $2.5 million for the interchange, and $1.5 million for the rest area.

The project is located at the Conrad interchange on I-15 at approximately reference post 343.3. The earmarked funds will be used to initiate preliminary design activities, which includes the environmental review process. Because of the rest area element, the department will design the project and administer the funds while the city and county will provide match for the Interchange component as consistent with Commission Policies #13 and #5. This project is already in our program as a rehabilitation project and it will be changed to include both the eastern ramp expansion and the rest area. This item is being submitted for Commission approval as consistent with Commission Policy #12, which requires re-

approval of projects changing in scope or cost. The referenced Commission policies are attached.

Great Falls South Arterial Development ($4.5 million)
The intent of this project is to construct a new arterial route connecting I-15 west of Great Falls to MT 3 east of Great Falls. It will serve to improve traffic flow and operations with in the Great Falls traffic network. The earmark funds will be used to perform a location study, preparation of an environmental document, and project design. Any funds remaining will be used to acquire right-of-way. MDT will administer funding and project development per our agreement with Great Falls. MDT will also provide the state matching funds, also per the existing agreement. This project is new to the program and as such requires commission approval.

Summary
SAFETEA-LU identified 33 individual earmarked projects in Montana. Some of these are on system and some are off system. This item is for two on-system projects worth $8.5 million for: Conrad I-15 North Interchange and Great Falls South Arterial Development. One of the projects is a new project to our program and requires Commission action.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends commission approve the addition of the Great Falls South Arterial project to the program for preliminary engineering. Staff is also requesting re-approval of the scope of work change for the Conrad I-15 N. Interchange.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 06

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Two SAFETEA-LU Earmarks off MDT Right-of-Way**

Background
Attached are two projects that have received Congressional earmarked dollars through the SAFETEA-LU authorization. SAFETEA-LU earmarked funds for thirty-three off and on-system project. These projects will receive an annual allocation and funds can be transferred between named projects, so projects may be able to advance to construction as soon as they are ready, provided that other projects are not disadvantaged and all funding accounts are balanced by the end of fiscal year 2009.

These projects are not located on MDT right-of-way and are presented as informational items only.

Silicon Mountain Technology Park & Port of Montana
The access road and bridge to the Silicon Mountain Technology Park and Port of Montana was identified to receive $4.0 million in earmarked funds. The funds will be used to make improvements to the bridge and access road to this growing industrial area, which is important to the economic health of the area. In addition, the route provides access to the Port of Montana. The Port is located near the intersection of two Interstate highways and the provides access to the BNSF and the Union Pacific Railroads. The port is of major importance to Montana's transportation system.

The proposed project is located on a local road (off-system) known as German Gulch Road, which is located west of the Victor Interchange on I-15 at reference post 119.9 in Butte-Silver Bow County. The proposed project is intended to reconstruct approximately one mile of road and the bridge over the Union Pacific railroad. MDT will administer the project development and construction as well as provide the non-federal matching funds.

Whitefish Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail
The Whitefish Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail was identified to receive $3.0 million in earmarked funds. The City of Whitefish identified six separate locations, throughout the Whitefish area, for construction of pedestrian and bicycle trails. Each of the trails will provide off-street link to residential neighborhoods, schools, and down town businesses consistent with the Whitefish Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails Master Plan.

The six proposed sites are located at various off-system routes throughout the Whitefish area. MDT will administer the project but will not provide the matching funds.

Summary
$4.0 million in Congressional earmarked funds will be applied to the reconstruction of the road and bridge accessing the Silicon Mountain Technology Park and Port of Montana. And $3.0 million in Congressional earmarked funds will be used to construct pedestrian and bicycle trails in the Whitefish area. MDT will be responsible to develop and administer both projects, but will only provide state matching funds for the Silicon Mountain Technology Park and Port of Montana.

Staff recommendations
Because both projects are off-system they are being presented for informational only and requires not action from the commission.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 07

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Wetland In Lieu Fee Payment**

Background
As a result of MDT's Wetland Monitoring Program, several of MDT's early wetland mitigation sites have not achieved the acreage goals that were originally identified in the US Army Corps of Engineers performance standards and objectives. As a result of not achieving these wetland acreage goals, MDT finds itself owing wetland acreage credits from impacts to construction projects long since completed. In an effort to clear the wetland ledger of these debits, MDT has proposed to provide payment to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Wetland Legacy program under auspices of the Corps In Lieu Fee Aquatic Resource Mitigation Program. The In Lieu Fee program allows MDT to provide payment instead of on the ground mitigation.

The department is requesting approval to establish a program in the amount of $268,425. This funding will be used for MDT forces as well as provide payment to FWP's Wetland Legacy Program. MDT forces will utilize $10,000 for prepare the environmental document, coordinate with the Corps and FWP, and develop and finalize an MOU between MDT, FWP and the Corps. The remaining $258,425 will be sent to FWP's Wetland Legacy Program to mitigate a total of 9.82 acres of wetland impacts in the Flathead River Basin, Middle Missouri River Basin, Lower Missouri River Basin, and Middle Yellowstone River Basin.

Summary
As a result of not achieving wetland acreage goals for highway construction projects, MDT is proposing to mitigate those impacts through direct payment to FWP via the In Lieu Fee Aquatic Resource Mitigation Program. This process will allow MDT to mitigate 9.82 acres of wetland impacted by our projects.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends commission approve the addition of the project to the program.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 08

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Wetland/Stream Restoration**

Background
As a result of the Blackfeet Nation Wetland Feasibility study completed in 2004 a number of potential mitigation projects identified by the Blackfeet Tribal Natural Resource Office were evaluated for development to provide MDT with wetland and stream mitigation credits. The purpose of this project is to study and develop restoration designs, entailing channel changes, for two potential stream restoration projects on the Two Medicine River within the tribal owned Yellow Owl and Barcus properties. Both mitigation sites are within close proximity of US Highway 89, which over the years has experienced bank erosion. The Yellow Owl project would restore a 1.5 mile meander channel of the Two Medicine River that was cutoff by a BIA irrigation diversion project in the late 1960's, which altered the river channel thus increasing stream flows and velocities onto the Barcus property.

Restoration of these stream corridors will provide MDT with both wetland and stream mitigation credits that can be utilized to mitigate wetland and stream impacts resulting from transportation projects on the Blackfeet Reservation. Realignment of the channel will also eliminate bank erosion of US 89. The purpose of this project will be to establish a preliminary engineering program to prepare the environmental document, develop preliminary design and construction plans, and to fund staff time to coordinate with the Corps, EPA, BIA, Blackfeet Tribe, and Natural Resource agencies. The amount of funds needed to perform the preliminary engineering is estimated at $325,000 of which $125,000 is needed for MDT staff and $200,000 for consultant design activities.

Summary
It is important for MDT to pursue wetland projects ahead of roadway projects. Basically, if the mitigation is not in place at the time of the project construction, the ratio for mitigating increases. There are a number of other criteria that affect mitigation ratios, but having mitigation in place prior to impact will be required in almost all cases. By mitigating these sites will allow the department to bank some mitigation credits that could be used in the future to mitigate highway projects impacting this watershed.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends the Commission approve the above project to the program.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 09

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **East Belgrade Interchange and Connecting Roads**
(see related agenda item #13)

Background
On December 10, 2004 a delegation from Gallatin County addressed the commission regarding the need for an interchange east of Belgrade. *(Minutes from that meeting are attached).*

This project is being developed as an additional interchange under Commission Policy #13. As such, a local government sponsor is responsible for the "financial and administrative burden."

At the December 10 meeting, Commission Chairman Shiell Anderson moved to program $250,000 to provide funding for MDT "staff review work and coordination with the locals," to "investigate a solution to the traffic problems in Belgrade." The proposed site of the planned interchange is located at approximately reference post 299.0 on I-90 which is roughly one half mile east of the Belgrade municipal limits. Commissioner Espy seconded the motion and all four commissioners present voted aye.

At the December 10 meeting the delegation indicated they were aware of Commission Policy #13 that identifies the local sponsor's responsibility to develop a funding plan to construct the interchange and its connecting links.

Federal Earmark
Towards fulfilling this responsibility, the local government (Gallatin County) requested earmarked funding through Montana's Congressional Delegation in the SAFETEA-Lu legislation. They were awarded $8 million in a Section 1934 Transportation Improvement to "Develop East Belgrade Interchange and connecting roadways to include environmental review."

These funds require a match of 13.42 percent and will have a percentage of the full amount distributed each year through 2009 to a project account. The funds are available until expended. However, funds can be transferred between this and other named earmarked projects in order to advance projects to construction as soon as they are ready, provided that other projects are not disadvantaged and all funding accounts are balanced by the end of fiscal year 2009.

The Section 1934 earmark funds will be used for preliminary engineering activities and construction. Gallatin County will develop the plans and acquire right-of-way and the

department will provide oversight and administer the funds. MDT will not be providing matching state funds for this earmark.

This position is consistent with the Transportation Commission Policy on Congressionally Directed Federal-aid Funding (Commission Policy #5), wherein "On any project for which directed funds are secured that is not within the Commission's approved future construction program, the sponsoring entity (local government, federal government, local interest group) must provide the non-federal matching funds." An agreement with Gallatin on funding roles and responsibilities is currently in negotiation.

Since the project is already in the program, the Commission does not need to approve programming of these funds.

The estimated cost for designing and building this interchange is approximately $25 million. At this time, MDT proposes to contribute $10 million towards this cost (see more detail below) in addition to the Section 1934 $8 million earmark.

Interstate Capacity Expansion and State Contribution
Also consistent with Commission Policy #13 (attached) regarding additional interchanges, any additional interchange has to have a funding plan in which cost participation is compatible with the interchange's intended use and beneficiaries. This means that the state may contribute funds commensurate with the benefit the state system will receives from the interchange's construction and operation.

Through a traffic demand model, it was determined that the new interchange would relieve traffic congestion on state maintained Secondary route 205. A suggested state contribution of $10 million for the interchange is the difference in cost between a future five-lane and a future three-lane configuration of Secondary 205. A three lane is sufficient if the interchange is constructed by or before 2011.

The entire $10 million state contribution identified for this interchange will be considered as additional to the earmarked funding received in SAFETEA-LU or any other appropriations earmark from the Federal-aid program acquired by the local sponsors. The $10 million state funding contribution will be applied to the construction phase. Note that other projects to address Interstate capacity needs are identified in agenda item #13. This set-aside is funded at $10 million annually to begin in 2008. Construction of these projects will proceed based on ready dates, completion of funding packages, and funding balances in the set-aside for interstate capacity described in item #13.

The state will match the proposed $10 million contribution. However, the contribution of these funds is contingent upon Gallatin County prioritizing S-205 for improvement, Gallatin County and the city of Belgrade constructing other connecting links needed for the operation of the interchange, and Gallatin County and city of Belgrade managing the other phases of project development.

Summary
The East Belgrade Interchange has received an $8 million SAFETEA-LU earmark that will be used to develop this project. In addition, staff recommends a $10 million Federal-aid contribution allocated to the project from the $10 million annual Interstate capacity set-aside to begin in 2008.

Consistent with Commission policies, the earmark will be matched by the local sponsors. MDT will match the other $10 million state Federal-aid contribution, but this contribution is contingent on several other elements needed for the functioning of the Interchange and future improvement of Secondary 205. This project will be brought to the Commission again for action as roles, responsibilities and pre-programming processes are concluded.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends approving $10 million in Federal-aid funds from the Interstate capacity set-aside towards constructing the Belgrade Interchange contingent on the county prioritizing improvements to S-205, constructing the other links described above, and the local sponsors managing the other phases of project development. In addition, staff recommends MDT match this allocation and make the funds available as soon as the project is ready to proceed to contract in or after fiscal year 2008.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 10

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Railroad crossing – signal installation & circuitry upgrade**

Background

Through the Rail Highway Safety program the installation of new signals and circuitry upgrade candidate projects are identified for funding. Prioritization is determined through a cooperative effort of the department and the railroad. New signal projects are identified by MDT priority index, which is based on vehicle and train exposer and geometric characteristics of the crossing. Circuitry upgrades are prioritized based on priority index and input provided by the railroad. Eleven different sites consisting of either new signals or circuitry upgrades have been prioritized for improvement through this process. The improvements will be funded with Surface Transportation Program Railroad Protective funds (STPRP under TEA-21) or the Rail-Highway Crossings Program (under SAFETEA-LU). The funds are used to pay for materials and labor. The appropriate railroad performs the installation. The location, railroad authority, proposed scope of improvement, and costs are as follows:

Dist	RR	Route	Location	Scope	Cost
5	BNSF	L-56-231N	Huntley NE 3 MI	New Signal	$203,500
5	BNSF	L-2-206N	Hardin E 1.5 MI	New Signal	$153,500
5	BNSF	M-105-3-N	Central Ave-Stanford	Circuitry	$153,500
5	BNSF	S-239	Central Ave-Hobson	Circuitry	$138,500
3	BNSF	L-51-110E	Devon W 3.5 MI	New Signal	$153,500
3	BNSF	L-21-58E	Rudyard E 1.5 MI	New Signal	$313,500
3	BNSF	L-3-9N	Chinook W 3MI	New Signal	$153,500
3	MRL	L-34-37	O'Rea Creek Road	New Signal	$133,500
2	MRL	L-16-192E	Moffit Canyon	New Signal	$133,500
2	MRL	U-1217N	Griffin Drive-Bozeman	Circuitry	$88,500
2	MRL	M-12-123N	L Street – Bozeman	Circuitry	$88,500
				Total	$1,713,500

Summary

Through a cooperative effort between BNSF, MRL, and MDT the projects listed above are proposed for improvement under the STPRP or Rail-Highway Crossings Program . MDT will pay for materials and labor totaling $1,713,500 and the railroad will be responsible for construction. These projects will be amended into the current STIP if approved by the Commission.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends the Commission approve the addition of these projects to the program.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 11

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Signal – Cartage Road on US 93 in Missoula**

Background
The purpose of this project is to install traffic signal control at the intersection of Cartage Road and US Highway 93 (N-5), RP 0.5, northwest of Missoula, Missoula County. Other work will include the installation of advance overhead flashers with signal ahead warning signs. An access study will also be included followed by access control from RP 0.4 to 0.6.

The total cost estimate for this project is $500,000 including $400,000 for the construction of the signal and advanced warning system, $60,000 for preliminary engineering, and $40,000 for construction engineering.

Funding for this project will be from the State Funded Construction Program (SFCN).

Summary
This project will initiate preliminary engineering to install a signal and advanced warning system on US 93 northwest of Missoula in Missoula County. The funding source is the State Funded Construction Program (SFCN).

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends commission approve the addition of this project to the program.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 12

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Addition of rehab projects to the program**
Culbertson – East and *MT 16 – Culbertson*

Background
The Glendive District has identified two projects they would like added to the program. The projects are *Culbertson – East* and *MT 16 – Culbertson*. The purpose of the *Culbertson – East* project is to rehabilitate the roadway surface and improve drainage through the town of Culbertson. The project limits are US Highway 2 (N-1), RP 644.245 to 648.070, Culbertson, Roosevelt County. The purpose of the *MT 16 – Culbertson* project is to resurface the roadway and improve drainage through the town of Culbertson. The project limits are MT Highway 16 (N-62), RP 0.0 to 0.4, Culbertson, Roosevelt County.

The cost estimate for the *Culbertson – East* project is $1.76 M including $1.6 M for the construction and $160,000 for construction engineering. The cost estimate for the *MT 16 – Culbertson* project is $170,000 including $150,000 for the construction and $20,000 for construction engineering.

Funding for these projects will be from the National Highway Non-Interstate Construction Program (NH). These projects will be tied for construction. These projects were submitted too late to be included in the STIP, but they are both consistent with Performance Programming analysis that indicated the need for this scope of work on Glendive's NH System. These projects will be amended into the STIP if approved by the Commission.

Summary
These projects will initiate preliminary engineering to rehabilitate US 2 and resurfacing of MT 16 in Culbertson. The funding source is the National Highway – Non-Interstate Construction Program (NH).

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends commission approve the addition of these projects to the program.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 13

Staff person handling: Sandra Straehl

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Interstate Capacity Program**
(Also see Agenda Item 9 for a related project)

Background
On October 7, 2003, the Transportation Commission took an action to set-aside $10 million per year, beginning in 2008 from the Interstate Maintenance Program to address interstate capacity issues. Based on the interchange needs analysis, information from interstate corridor studies and environmental reviews, and discussions with MDT district administrators, the following projects have been identified for improvement under this program. The long-range construction program will begin in 2006 to carry Interstate capacity projects at the PE level. Construction projects will proceed into construction based on ready dates, completion of funding packages, and funding balance in this program. The intent is to continue this program until these projects are completed. However, the program may be re-evaluated in the future to determine if it should be extended.

Missoula District – Orange Street to Bonner
This project is located on I-90, beginning at the Orange Street interchange reference post 104.8 and extending east to the Bonner interchange at reference post 110.0 in Missoula County. The proposed scope of work entails the addition of lanes between the Orange Street interchange and the Bonner interchange. Depending upon the results of signal warrant studies it may also include signalization of the ramps at Orange Street and Van Buren Street interchanges. This project will be added to the long-range program to initiate preliminary engineering activities in the amount of $780,000. The construction cost is estimated at $5.2 million with construction anticipated to occur in 2010. The project will be funded out of this funding set-aside.

Great Falls District

Helena Capital Interchange, Highway 12 Connection, and I-15 Railroad Bridges and Additional Lanes from Capital to Custer
This includes three projects related to the I-15 corridor EIS in Helena.

Short Term Improvements to Helena Capital Interchange - may involve additional lanes on Highway 12 as well as the southbound exit ramp. The project is located on I-15 at reference post 192.1. This portion will be programmed for preliminary engineering for $250,000 with a construction date established in the long-range plan for 2009. The construction cost is estimated at $2.0 million.

Highway 12 Connection Helena – the intent of the improvement is to construct a connecting route from the, soon to be constructed, South Helena Interchange to Highway 12 (N-8) east to a point in the vicinity of the west city limits of East Helena. This project will originate from the South Helena Interchange on I-15 reference post 191 and proceed

east to a connecting point on Highway 12 east which is yet to be determined. This portion of the proposal will be programmed for preliminary engineering in the amount of $250,000 for the purposes of determining alignment, securing environmental clearances. Construction phase may be considered for future funding in this program based on the contribution of others including the contribution of right-of-way. Actual construction costs will be determined upon completion of the environmental review process and the establishment of alignment. Note: this connecting link should reduce pressure on the Capital Interchange and, together with the short-term improvements to Capital Interchange, requested for programming above, may significantly delay the need for more costly improvements to the Capital Interchange.

Railroad Bridges and Additional Lanes Between Custer and Capital Interchanges – The intent of this project is to initiate preliminary engineering to begin design work to address the deteriorating condition of the railroad bridges on I-15 reference post 192.6 and add additional driving lanes on I-15 between Capital Interchange and Custer Avenue in Helena consistent with the I-15 Corridor EIS. This project will be programmed for preliminary engineering in the amount of $3.0 million to determine scope of work. Construction is estimated at $22.0 million.

Billings District – West Laurel Interchange

This project is located on I-90 at reference post 433.0 in Yellowstone County. Proposed scope of work entails replacing the existing railroad bridge with a new reconfigured bridge and realigning approximately 1 mile of roadway. Because of the complexity of the project and design time actual construction will most likely occur in 2012 or 2013. The intent is to proceed with adding the project to the long-range program and initiate preliminary engineering in the amount of $1.5 million. Construction is estimated at $10.0 million.

Butte District

See Agenda Item 9, which recommends a state cost contribution of $10 million for the East Belgrade Interchange from this state funding set-aside.

Summary

$10 million per year was targeted for addressing interstate capacity issues at the October 2003 commission meeting. Based on an analysis of the statewide needs and district priorities, the department has identified several locations that demonstrate capacity problems, and the department is proposing to use this funding set-aside to begin designing and implementing improvements.

Staff recommendations

Staff recommends commission approve addition of the following projects to the program:

- I-90 Missoula to Bonner lane capacity expansion.
- Short-term improvements to Capital Interchange.
- Connecting link from I-90 South Helena Interchange to US 12 west of East Helena.
- Railroad bridges and added lanes I-15 between Capital Interchange and Custer Ave.
- West Laurel Interchange bridge replacement and roadway realignment.

In addition, staff recommends reserving $10 million from this program to be used for the state's funding contribution towards construction and construction engineering for the Belgrade Interchange (see agenda item 9 for more information).

These projects will move to construction based on ready dates, funding plans, and funding balance in this set-aside program. Match rate should be based on underlying system and federal-aid eligibilities.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 14

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Letting Lists**

Background
Staff will distribute the most current lists of upcoming projects slated for advertisement and bid letting.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends approval of the letting lists.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 15

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Certificates of completion for July and August 2005**

Background
Attached are the certificates of completion for July and August 2005.

Staff recommendations
Staff recommends approval

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 16

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Change Orders**

Background
Attached are change orders for August and September 2005.

Summary

Month	*Total*
August 2005	$1,124,753.08
September 2005	$949,042.69
	$2,073,795.77

Staff recommendation
Staff recommends approval.

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 17 A

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: Nov 1, 2005 / Helena

Item: **Liquidated Damages** – SFCN 10-2(27)52 – *Loma – Box Elder*

Background
Prince Inc. of Forsyth, MT overran the contract by 25 days. We wrote the contractor on August 1, 2005 of the overrun of contract time. They were informed they had 30 days in which to respond if they intended to request a waiver from the Commission. As there was no response from the Contractor, our recommendation is noted below.

Summary

Award Date:	October 21, 2002	Proceed Date:	November 25, 2002
Work Began:	March 4, 2003	Work Completed:	October 17, 2003
Contract Time:	75 working days	Work Extensions:	0
Time Used:	100 working days	Overrun:	25 days
Contract Amount:	$4,355,419.71		

Staff recommendations
We recommend assessing 25 days at $1,818.00 per day for a total of $45,450.00

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 17 B

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 – Helena, MT

Item: **Liquidated Damages –** NH 16-1(42)1 – *Main Street – Billing Heights*

Background
Empire Sand & Gravel Co. of Billings, MT overran the contract time by 6 days. We wrote the contractor on May 9, 2005; July 6, 2005 and August 19, 2005 of the overrun of contract time. Empire Sand & Gravel Co. responded on June 2, 2005; July 29, 2005 and September 9, 2005. In the September 9, 2005 response, Empire Sand & Gravel agreed with the 6 days of liquidated damages assessed. Our recommendation is noted below.

Summary

Award Date:	March 8, 2004	Proceed Date:	April 5, 2004
Work Began:	May 4, 2004	Work Completed:	March 10, 2005
Contract Time:	60 working days	Work Extensions:	0
Time Used:	66 working days	Overrun:	6 days
Contract Amount:	$1,732,222.00		

Staff recommendations
We recommend assessing 6 days at $1,192.00 per day for a total of $7,152.00

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 17 C

Staff person handling: Loran Frazier, Chief Engineer

Date/location: November 1, 2005 – Helena, MT

Item: **Liquidated damages –** STPS-PLH 323-1(15)51 - *Albion N & S*

Background
Westway Construction Inc of Airway Heights, WA overran the contract time by 1 day. We wrote the contractor numerous letters beginning on June 1, 2004 of the overrun of contract time. The Department reviewed the contract time assessment and found no reason to waive the liquidated damages assessment. Westway Construction, Inc. has requested to be heard by the Commission at this meeting. Our recommendation is noted below.

Summary

Award Date:	Nov 20, 2002	Proceed Date:	Dec 30, 2002
Work Began:	Feb 18, 2003	Work Completed:	June 7, 2004
Contract Time:	150 working days	Work Extensions:	16 working days
Time Used:	167 working days	Overrun:	1 days
Contract Amount:	$3,835,198.00		

Staff recommendations
We recommend assessing one day at $1,818.00 per day for a total of $1,818.00

Notes/discussion

Commission action

Agenda item: 18

Staff person handling: Chairman Kennedy

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Set commission schedule for upcoming meetings**

Background

Chairman Kennedy requested that the commission set the schedule for their 2006 meetings during the November 1 meeting. Conference call dates (to award projects) are shown in bold. Public holidays are shown shaded in gray. Please see next page for some dates that staff may be unavailable to meet.

January 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	**6**	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	**6**	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	**10**	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	a8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	**3**	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	**31**					

August 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	**28**	29	30	31		

September 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	**2**	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	**13**	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2006

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	**18**	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Holidays and Observances

Jan 1	New Year's Day	Apr 16	Easter Sunday	Oct 31	Halloween
Jan 2	New Year's Day observed	May 29	Memorial Day	Nov 10	Veterans Day observed
Jan 16	Martin Luther King Day	Jul 4	Independence Day	Nov 11	Veterans Day
Feb 14	Valentine's Day	Sep 4	Labor Day	Nov 23	Thanksgiving Day
Feb 20	President's Day	Oct 9	Columbus Day	Dec 25	Christmas Day
Mar 17	St. Patrick's Day				
Apr 14	Good Friday				

Calendar courtesy of www.timeanddate.com

2006		
Advertisement Date	**Bid Letting Date**	**Commission Award Date**
December 29, 2005	January 26, 2006	February 6, 2006
January 26, 2006	February 23, 2006	March 6, 2006
March 2, 2006	March 30, 2006	April 10, 2006
March 30, 2006	April 27, 2006	May 8, 2006
April 27, 2006	May 25, 2006	June 5, 2006
May 25, 2006	June 22, 2006	July 3, 2006
June 22, 2006	July 20, 2006	July 31, 2006
July 20, 2006	August 17, 2006	August 28, 2006
August 24, 2006	September 21, 2006	October 2, 2006
October 5, 2006	November 2, 2006	November 13, 2006
November 9, 2006	December 7, 2006	December 18, 2006

Other significant dates:

January 2006
Transportation Research Board annual meeting (January 22–26, 2006 in Washington, DC)
February, 2006
Washington Briefing (02/07/06 – 02/09/06 in Washington DC)
April, 2006
Standing Committee on Quality (04/03/2006 – 04/06/2006 in Phoenix, Arizona)
May, 2006
AASHTO Spring Meeting (05/05/2006 – 05/08/2006 in Jeckyll Island, Georgia)
August, 2006
WASHTO annual meeting (08/26/2006 – 08/30/2006 in Honolulu, Hawaii)
October, 2006
AASHTO annual meeting (10/25/2006 –10/31/2006 in Portland, Oregon)

Montana Association of County events for 2006:

January 18-20	Loss Control Conference	Fairmont
February 13-17	Midwinter Conference	Great Falls
April 3-6	County Road Supervisors Convention	Great Falls
April 20-21	Insurance Trustees meeting	Helena
May 10-12	Western Region Conference	Sacramento, CA
August 4-8	National Association Conference	Chicago
September 24-28	Annual Conference	Bozeman

Agenda item: 19

Staff person handling: Jim Lynch

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Commission Discussion**

Items for discussion

- Update on Governor's work on tribal relations
- Update on Morning Star Drive
- Follow-up on Secondary 201 issue raised at Baker meeting
- Follow-up item on base stabilizer raised at E. Glacier meeting
- Follow-up item on new construction in Browning

Update on Morning Star Drive

Background

At the July 28 commission meeting in Baker, the commission heard a delegation from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe regarding the need for the Morning Star Drive project to be constructed in Lame Deer. Commissioner Espy moved to support the recommendation of staff (to transfer the funds to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to construct the project this construction season using force account crews) and proceed with this recommendation as quickly as possible; Commissioner Howlett seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Follow-up on Secondary 201 issue raised at Baker meeting

Background

At the July 28 commission meeting in Baker, Richland County Commissioner Mark Rehbein talked about Secondary 201 northwest of Sidney, a main road that's getting heavy use from the oil industry. Rehbein said the traffic count on the road is in excess of 50 trucks per hour, both loaded and unloaded, and the road is deteriorating rapidly. He asked the state to come up with a solution other than asking the other counties in the region to re-order their priority for the next secondary roads project. (Secondary 261 was established as the county priority a number years ago, before the oil boom hit.)

MDT Glendive District Administrator Ray Mengel said the state has put in over $100,000 in maintenance costs this spring trying to keep the road together. Additionally, Mengel said during the spring thaw we also put a speed limit and load limit on the road, but the oil field traffic volume is up so much that the road is still being damaged.

Chairman Kennedy asked Lynch to take this back to staff and bring a response back to the commission at their next meeting.

Follow-up item on base stabilizer on gravel roads

Background

At the commission's September 8 meeting in East Glacier, Liberty County shared that they have been exploring the use of a base stabilizer on gravel roads. In their experience, once applied, the base stabilizer hardens the road and helps preserve the gravel. The road then requires less maintenance (has cut down grading to once a year) which keeps costs down. Recognizing that the potential for many of their gravel roads to be paved is limited, they asked if this would be something that the state could assist them with for use on gravel secondary roads.

Follow-up item on new construction in Browning

Background

At the September commission meeting, Representative Carol Juneau expressed concerns regarding safety in Browning at the Blackfeet Community College (BCC) and in the area where a new high school and casino are proposed. Commissioner Howlett asked for a follow-up report on this item.

Agenda item: 20

Staff person handling: Chairman Kennedy

Date/location: November 1, 2005 in Helena, MT

Item: **Public Comment**

Background